

CLASSIFICATION **SECRET**
 CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
 INFORMATION FROM
 FOREIGN DOCUMENTS OR RADIO BROADCASTS

REPORT

50X1-HUM

CD NO.

COUNTRY USSR

DATE OF
INFORMATION 1950

SUBJECT Medical - Theory

DATE DIST. 29 Jun 1950

HOW
PUBLISHED Weekly newspapers

NO. OF PAGES 6

WHERE
PUBLISHED MoscowDATE
PUBLISHED 9 Feb - 11 May 1950

SUPPLEMENT TO

LANGUAGE Russian

50X1-HUM

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS INFORMATION AFFECTING THE NATIONAL DEFENSE
 OF THE UNITED STATES WITHIN THE MEANING OF ESPIONAGE ACT 50
 U. S. C. 31 AND 32 AS AMENDED. ITS TRANSMISSION OR THE REVELATION
 OF ITS CONTENTS IN ANY MANNER TO AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON IS PRO-
 HIBITED BY LAW. REPRODUCTION OF THIS FORM IS PROHIBITED.

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

SOURCE Meditsinskiy Rabotnik and Literaturnaya Gazeta.

DEBATE ON A. D. SPERANSKIY'S
UNIFIED MEDICAL THEORY IN THE USSR

[Numbers in parentheses refer to the table at the end of the report which shows the amount of space devoted by Meditsinskiy Rabotnik to the various articles discussed below.]

The key article on Academician A. D. Speranskiy's unified medical theory (1), which started the current debate in Meditsinskiy Rabotnik was published by S. Sarkisov, Academician-Secretary of the Academy of Medical Sciences USSR, in the 9 February 1950 issue of that newspaper under the title "The Teaching of I. P. Pavlov and Medical Science" [redacted] This was followed by an article, "On the Contemporary State of Medical Science," published in the 16 February 1950 issue of the same paper by Speranskiy himself (2). In a footnote to the latter article the editorial board of Meditsinskiy Rabotnik pointed out that the questions raised by Sarkisov and Speranskiy are of the greatest importance to the medical profession, and invited USSR medical scientists to express their opinion by writing to Meditsinskiy Rabotnik on these questions for publication in that newspaper.

50X1-HUM

In the first article cited above, Professor Sarkisov mentioned that some people had opposed Speranskiy's theory at a meeting, and had requested additional experimental proof. Sarkisov asked in his article why Speranskiy's opponents did not try to use their own experimental facilities for obtaining proof, in view of the fact that the Institute of General Pathology directed by Speranskiy could not possibly do all the work in the field of pathology. Speranskiy, in the article published under his name, did not enter the discussion, but concentrated on the theoretical and philosophical aspects of the new theory and referred to Virchow's and Erlich's theories as sterile and bourgeois. He stated in conclusion, however, that reactionary theories must be uprooted and that a reorientation of the medical profession and medical research appears to be desirable. This end, in Speranskiy's opinion, must be achieved by a discussion on the broadest scientific front, with participation of the broadest masses of

SECRET

- 1 -

CLASSIFICATION			SECRET									
STATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NAVY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NSRB	DISTRIBUTION									
ARMY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AIR	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FBI										

SECRET

SECRET

50X1-HUM

scientific workers, and definitely not carried on exclusively through the medium of a newspaper debate, in the course of which it is impossible to present complete scientific data. He said he did not quite agree with Sarkisov's attitude toward the discussion apparently proposed by the latter.

The articles by Sarkisov and Speranskiy and the invitation by the editors of Meditinskiy Rabotnik to continue the discussion resulted in a number of contributions published in that newspaper during February, March, and April 1950. Editorials on statements referring to Speranskiy's theory and news items, brief letters to the editor, and other material also appeared in Meditinskiy Rabotnik during this period, up to 11 May. The principal published items coming within the scope of that discussion are noted below.

In the 23 February 1950 issue of Meditinskiy Rabotnik, Professor A. Strukov, Corresponding Member of the Academy of Medical Sciences USSR, published an article, "For Progressive Soviet Medical Science" (3). Although in general approving the new theory, Strukov rather obliquely points out the simultaneous importance of humoral factors in disease. In the 2 March 1950 issue, Professor S. Pavlenko (Kazan') reported on the All-Union Conference on Pathological Physiology which took place in Kazan' (4). Material relevant to the discussion was presented at the meeting. In reporting on the meeting, Professor Pavlenko includes his own remarks, which are favorable to Speranskiy's theory.

The 16 March 1950 issue contains an article by A. Myasnikov, Acting Member of the Academy of Medical Sciences USSR, "Nervism and Soviet Therapy" (5). This article rejects Virchow's theory on general grounds, but otherwise criticizes Speranskiy's theory as far as definite applications are concerned [redacted]

50X1-HUM
50X1-HUM

The 16 March 1950 issue also presents an editorial on a meeting of the Moscow Society of Pathological Anatomy which debated the questions raised in the current controversy in Meditinskiy Rabotnik. The editorial, entitled "On the Wrong Path," (6) criticizes Professors A. I. Strukov, I. V. Davydovskiy, and Rapaport, who opposed the views of Speranskiy's group at the meeting. It deplores the "sensational" fight between adherents of Davydovskiy and Speranskiy at the meeting, berating Bronovitskiy and Ostryy, adherents of Speranskiy, for sheer vituperation, and microbiologist Professor Sakharov and Dr Dzugaeva, opponents of Speranskiy, for facetious conduct and ideological transgressions (according to the report, Dr Dzugaeva reduced her arguments to criticism of the system of administrative servility and nepotism which flourishes at certain scientific institutes). In conclusion, the editorial praises the responsible attitude of Professor Solov'ev, Dr M. Durmish'yan, adherents of Speranskiy's "nervism", and Professor Neyman, who does not accept Speranskiy's theory completely, but assumes a neutral attitude, and calls on the Scientific Medical Council of the Ministry of Health to intervene in uprooting surviving remainders of reactionary theories in scientific societies. A third item in the same issue, "New Work Done by Soviet Pathologists" [redacted] reports on experimental results obtained under Speranskiy's direction at the Institute of General and Experimental Pathology of the Academy of Medical Sciences USSR (7).

50X1-HUM

The report on the meeting of the Moscow Society of Pathological Anatomists (17 March 1950 session) was concluded in the next (23 March 1950) issue of Meditinskiy Rabotnik (8). Professor Kassirskiy's defense of the etiological principle in clinical medicine against extreme conceptions of Speranskiy's school is mentioned first. This is followed by references to Professor Rusakov's report (giving specific examples) on the inculcation of Pavlov's "nervism" into pathological anatomy by drawing the latter closer to physiology and Speranskiy's report on the same general subject. After this, Professor Strukov's concluding speech, in which he accepts criticism directed against himself and against the work of the Society of Pathological Anatomy as justified, is reported. Professor

- 2 -

SECRET

SECRET

SECRET

SECRET

50X1-HUM

Davydovskiy's speech, which closed the debate over which he had presided, is mentioned next with a reference to Davidovskiy's final criticism of Speranskiy's theory as a mechanistic and incorrect conception of Pavlov's "nervism" erring in the assumption of a virtual autonomy of the nervous system. According to the editorial, Davydcvskiy reproached Speranskiy with an attitude involving the negation of successes of Soviet medicine in its fight with Virchow's dogmas.

The 23 March issue also carried an article by A. Alymov, Corresponding Member of the Academy of Sciences USSR, "For the Pavlov Direction in Medical Science" (9). In this article Alymov gives a very favorable review of Speranskiy's theory and of experimental results obtained by Speranskiy and his group. Alymov's attitude is seconded by Dr M. Durmish'yan in an article published in the 30 March 1950 issue of Meditinskiy Rabotnik [redacted] under the title "National Physiology in Opposition to Cellular Pathology" (10). In the 30 March issue the editorial board published excerpts from letters to the editor (11) in which readers (medical practitioners, according to the heading "The Medical Practitioner Speaks") express themselves both for and against Speranskiy's unified medical theory based on the concept of "nervism" [redacted]. The editorial comments published in connection with these readers' opinions in the 30 March 1950 issue are definitely in favor of Speranskiy's theory, however. The editor points out that the current discussion has had a tremendous impact on the medical opinion of the country and that neutrality in the fight between two irreconcilable medical theories is impossible. Under the circumstances, the editor is surprised that the Academy of Sciences of the USSR and the Scientific Medical Council of the Ministry of Health still occupy the position of inactive bystanders.

50X1-HUM

50X1-HUM

In the 6 April 1950 issue Meditinskiy Rabotnik published under the caption, "Pavlov's Teaching Put Into Science and Practice!" the full text of a speech held by E. I. Smirnov, Minister of Health USSR, at the All-Union Meeting of Leading Workers of University Medical Faculties (12). In this speech, Smirnov squarely defends Speranskiy's theory and criticizes Professors A. I. Strukov and A. I. Myasnikov, on the basis of their articles in Meditinskiy Rabotnik for their opposition to that theory [redacted].

50X1-HUM

In the 13 April 1950 issue of Meditinskiy Rabotnik, Professor A. Zubkov (Minsk) published an article entitled "Introducing Full Clarity" (13) in which he criticizes Speranskiy's unified theory as metaphysical and rash in its broad interpretation of Pavlov's purely experimental results leading to the concept of "nervism." At the same time Zubkov appreciates the positive experimental achievements of Speranskiy's group. In the same issue, V. Popov, assistant to the chief anatomist of the Bezhitsa (Bryansk Oblast) Municipal Hospital, in a letter entitled "Nearer to Practical Applications," (14) declares that he is a confirmed follower of Speranskiy, but criticizes Speranskiy's group for inadequate publicity which they give to their own work and for a tendency to negate past achievements of Russian medicine. A third item in the same issue touching on the controversy is a dispatch from Leningrad by Special Correspondent N. Orlov reporting on a discussion of Speranskiy's theory at an expanded session of the Scientific Council of the Institute of Experimental Medicine of the Academy of Sciences USSR, i.e., I. P. Pavlov's Institute, and other relevant papers presented at the same meeting (15). N. Orlov deplores the reluctance of D. N. Nasonov and P. S. Kupalov, Acting Members Academy of Medical Sciences; Professor A. Yu. Bronovitskiy; V. Ya. Aleksandrov, Doctor of Biological Sciences; and S. V. Anichkov, Corresponding Member, Academy of Medical Sciences, to express themselves explicitly on the subject of the current controversy. He also reports on comments made by Kupalov (against Speranskiy's theory), Dr M. G. Durmish'yan (for), Academician K. M. Bykov (against), V. I. Ioffe Corresponding Member,

SECRET

- 3 -

SECRET

SECRET

SECRET

50X1-HUM

Academy of Sciences (favorable, but pointing out that Pavlov's work was never concerned with the pathology of infectious diseases), N. N. Zayko (for, pointing out lack of bolshevist self-criticism evinced in the report presented by the director of the institute, D. N. Nasonov), Dr O. Ya Ostryy (for), and D. N. Nasonov (recognizing justification of the criticism directed against himself and against the work of the institute). In conclusion Orlov mentions criticism leveled against the Institute of Experimental Medicine at the Party Conference of the Petrograd Region of Leningrad and himself criticizes the institute for a pseudoacademic attitude and for unproductive work, the last being partly due, in Orlov's opinion, to faulty management for which the directors of the institute and the Presidium or the Academy of Medical Sciences are responsible.

The 20 April 1950 issue of Meditinskiy Rabotnik published under the title "I. P. Pavlov's Heritage and Medical Science" an article written by P. Kupalov (Leningrad), Acting Member, Academy of Medical Sciences in which the author criticizes Speranskiy's ideas on the role of the nervous system in the pathology of infectious diseases. The criticism is rather mild and is based wholly on experimental facts. This article is followed in the same issue by a communication entitled "Against the Golden Middle" by Professor V. Andguladze (16). Andguladze states that although the results obtained at his institute are in complete agreement with Speranskiy's theory, the editors of both Terapevticheskiy Arkhiv (Archive of Therapy) and Klinicheskaya Meditsina (Clinical Medicine) have refused to publish them, and the Organizational Committee of the 13th Meeting of Therapists has refused to give him time for the presentation of a paper. Andguladze regards this as a manifestation of the hidden war between two irreconcilable tendencies in medical science.

In the 4 May 1950 issue of Meditinskiy Rabotnik an article, "Problems of Nerve Trophism in Contemporary Medicine," (17) was published in which the author, Professor M. Borovskiy of Moscow reviews favorably Speranskiy's work, points out the universal significance of nerve dystrophies in disease, and mentions cases of successful treatment of bilateral tuberculosis by alcoholization of the peripherally severed diaphragmal nerve on one side carried out by Professor V. F. Shchebanov at the Moscow Oblast Tuberculosis Institute at his, Borovskiy's, suggestion.

In the 11 May 1950 issue of Meditinskiy Rabotnik, Docent O. Vasil'evskaya published under the title "Against Remnants of Virchow's Teachings in Medical Literature" a report on an expanded meeting of the Editorial Council of Medgiz (State Press for Medical Literature) (18). According to Vasil'evskaya's report, the meeting consisted of an address by Dr M. G. Durmish'yan, Senior Editor of Medgiz, on the subject "Two Tendencies in Medical Science," and a discussion of that address. A number of standard Soviet medical books is honeycombed with outlived remnants of Virchow's teachings, according to Dr Durmish'yan's statement in his address, and this situation must be corrected. He also said that a complete break between the principle of chemotherapy, on one side, and Pavlov's "nervism" and Michurin's biology, on the other, has taken place at present. All participants of the discussion whose opinions are cited in the report on the meeting (Professor A. I. Strukov, Corresponding Member, Academy of Medical Sciences, Professor S. M. Pavlenko, Professor A. F. Bilibin, and Acting Professor V. A. Gilyarovskiy, Member, Academy of Medical Sciences) agreed with Dr Durmish'yan's essential thesis on the reaction of the organism as a whole and the neurotropic character of all disease, i.e., Speranskiy's theory, according to Vasil'evskaya. Professor S. M. Pavlenko pointed out particularly the significance of Speranskiy's teachings for the solution of questions in the field of immunology and immunotherapy.

SECRET

- 4 -

SECRET

SECRET

SECRET

50X1-HUM

The controversy on the subject of Speranskiy's unified theory has also attracted attention elsewhere. Pointing out the broad public interest in the questions touched upon in the discussion, the editors of Literaturnaya Gazeta requested Academician Speranskiy to contribute an article. This article was published under the title "On the Situation in Medical Science" in the 29 March 1950 issue of that newspaper. In this article Speranskiy draws a parallel between Virchov's theory and the teachings of Weismann, Mendel, and Morgan. As these teachings have been overthrown by Michurinist biology, reactionary tendencies in medicine must be overthrown by the new school of pathology which originated with Pavlov, according to Speranskiy. He deplores the attempt made by Professor I. V. Davidovskiy and his group to drive a wedge between the new school of pathology and I. P. Pavlov's teachings. To demonstrate the value of the new theory, Speranskiy enumerates methods of medical intervention which, in accordance with the new theory, are aimed not at the disease agent, the original cause of the disease, but at the organism, and particularly at its nervous system. These methods of medical intervention, which have already been applied successfully on thousands of patients, comprise, according to Speranskiy's statement, the novocaine renal vicinity blockade (A. V. Bishnavskiy) and epidermal blockade in pneumonia (A. D. Speranskiy, E. M. Ginzburg, and others), the magnesium blockade (Ya. Yu. Shpirt), the deep-sleep treatment of internal diseases (F. A. Andreev), various forms of affecting a specific (peripheral) segment of a nerve (M. L. Borovskiy, F. M. Golub, and F. M. Shebanov), and therapy of nonpulmonary tuberculosis by affecting the nerve apparatus of the lung, etc. (O. Ya. Ostryy, N. A. Albov, D. N. Atabekov, O. N. Podvysotskaya, and others). According to Speranskiy, many traditional methods of treatment, which hitherto have been purely empirical (cups, leeches, mustard plasters, compresses, pneumothorax, balneotherapy, electrotherapy, etc.), can be explained scientifically on the basis of the new theory.

In conclusion, Speranskiy says, as far as the discussion on the pages of Meditsinskiy Rabotnik is concerned:

"It seems to me that the newspaper has not yet approximated an understanding of the tasks posed. A number of articles in this paper go into particulars, but disregard the principle. Editorial articles of Meditsinskiy Rabotnik reflect the absence of a firm decision on the part of the paper in this discussion."

He concludes the article by saying:

"The correct solution of this question has by no means purely theoretical significance. The assertion of Pavlov's ideas in medicine will open up new paths for the prevention and cure of disease. This is why millions of Soviet people are interested in the outcome of the struggle between the old and the new in medical science."

As far as could be established, the article by Speranskiy in "Literaturnaya Gazeta" represents the only reference to the current controversy published outside the medical and scientific press.

The controversy has not been mentioned in daily newspapers regularly available. So far, the discussion has been limited to a strictly scientific and medical level, and the current prominence given to it apparently might be ascribed to an attempt to propagandize the medical profession.

The space given to this controversy in the various issues of Meditsinskiy Rabotnik by the editors was as follows:

SECRET

- 5 -

SECRET

SECRET

SECRET

50X1-HUM

- | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. 1/2 page, regular print | 2. 1/2 page, regular print |
| 3. 1/3 " , small " | 4. 1/3 page, small " |
| 5. 1/2 " , " " | 6. " " , " " |
| 7. 1/10 " , " " | 8. 1/10 " , " " |
| 9. 1/3 " , " " | 10. 1/2 " , " " |
| 11. 1/2 " , " " | 12. " " , " " |
| 13. " " , " " | 14. " " , " " |
| 15. 1/3 " , " " | 16. 1/10 " , " " |
| 17. " " , " " | 18. 1/3 " , " " |

This amount of space devoted to the current discussion by a four-page weekly newspaper, which carries official announcements occupying a large part of the first page, may possibly serve as a measure of the importance being attached to the subject under discussion.

- E N D -

SECRET

- 6 -

SECRET